

BOOK REVIEW

EUGENE S. HUNN. 2008. **A Zapotec Natural History: Trees, Herbs, and Flowers, Birds, Beasts, and Bugs in the Life of San Juan Gbëë.** (ISBN 978-0-816-52617-8, hbk.). University of Arizona Press, 355 South Euclid Avenue, Suite 103, Tucson, Arizona 85719, U.S.A., (**Orders:** www.uapress.edu, 1-800-426-3797). \$50.00, 262pp., CD-Rom, 11 b&w photos, 6" × 9".

To appreciate fully this work and the field work that went into it, the reader should be interested in the language of the Zapotec people of Oaxaca as well as in their culture and in the botany of the region. While the author enumerates the diversity of animal life, domestic and wild, he concentrates on the inhabitants' relationships with plants. His analyses are not limited to indigenous plants as the Zapotecs use many non-native cultivars in agriculture and in their home flower gardens, which in turn become part of their cultural use in ceremonies and festivals, and more importantly as remedies. As the author explains, the "folk science" of ethnomedical knowledge, plants used for medicinal purposes, is the most interesting of plant-human relationships, and because of that importance, it's one of the reasons that children even at a very young age become acquainted with plants as herbal medicines. His chapters on these subjects are especially thorough and enlightening.

Part 2, the CD-Rom, is strong on language, the Zapotec, Spanish, English, and Latin binomials for the species mentioned in the text.—Joann Karges, *Texas Christian University Library (Retired), Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.*